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2002HANOI02078 - CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION EAP-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	DINT-00
	DODE-00	DOEE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	ED-01	FBIE-00
	VC-00	HHS-01	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	LAB-01
	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01
	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00
	STR-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-02
	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/011W			

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FM AMEMBASSY HANOI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7374
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIJING
AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L HANOI 002078

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/BCLTV AND DRL

E.O. 12958: DECL 08/22/2012
TAGS: PHUM PINS PGOV SOCI VM HUMANR
SUBJECT: UPDATE ON DETAINED DEMOCRACY ACTIVISTS

REF: HANOI 1787

1. (U) CLASSIFIED BY POL/C SCOTT BELLARD; REASON 1.5(D)
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2. (C) THIS IS AN ACTION REQUEST -- SEE PARA 7.

3. (C) FOLLOWING THE EXPECTED JULY 27 EXPIRATION DATE OF A FOUR-MONTH DETENTION ORDER ON DEMOCRACY ACTIVIST PHAM HONG SON DURING INVESTIGATION OF HIS ALLEGED "SPY ACTIVITIES," POLOFF HAS CONTACTED HIS WIFE VO THI HA BY TELEPHONE. MRS. HA ON AUGUST 22 DECLINED TO DISCUSS HIS CURRENT STATUS OVER AN OPEN PHONE LINE BUT DID NOT OFFER TO MEET. SHE NONETHELESS ASKED POLOFF WHETHER EMBASSY HAD ANY NEWS ABOUT HIS CASE AND ASKED WITH SOME APPARENT URGENCY IF THE EMBASSY COULD QUERY THE GVN AGAIN ABOUT HER HUSBAND'S STATUS. SHE ADMITTED THAT SHE HERSELF WAS HAVING A "LITTLE BIT OF DIFFICULTY" AT HER WORKPLACE (THE HANOI OFFICE OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC FRANCOPHONIE ORGANIZATION), BUT ONLY BECAUSE OF HER "DISTRACTION" OVER HER HUSBAND'S CASE.

4. (C) DEMOCRACY ACTIVIST DR. NGUYEN THANH GIANG ON AUGUST 21 HAD TOLD POLOFF OF MRS. HA'S REPORTED TROUBLES AND URGED POLOFF TO WEIGH IN WITH HER BOSS, A REQUEST THAT SHE HERSELF HAS NOT MADE TO POLOFF SEPARATELY DESPITE HIS INQUIRIES ABOUT HOW EMBASSY COULD BE HELPFUL. DR. GIANG ALSO RELATED THAT MRS. HA HAD TOLD HIM THAT POLICE HAD QUESTIONED HER ABOUT CONNECTIONS WITH GIANG AND SPECIFICALLY ABOUT A WIDELY DISTRIBUTED LETTER (REFTEL) THAT SHE HAD WRITTEN COMPLAINING ABOUT HER HUSBAND'S DETENTION. DR. GIANG CLARIFIED THAT HE HAD ADVISED HER ABOUT THE LETTER'S CONTENTS BUT HAD NOT WRITTEN IT FOR HER.

5. (C) DR. GIANG ADDED THAT, AFTER THE GVN DETAINED LE CHI QUANG IN FEBRUARY AND PHAM HONG SON IN MARCH, HE HAD
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CONTACTED THEIR FAMILIES, WHOM HE HAD NOT PREVIOUSLY KNOWN. INITIALLY, HE SAID, THEY WERE RELUCTANT TO HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH HIM, BUT SINCE THEN HE HAS INVITED THEM TO HIS HOME FOR MEALS AND HAS NOW BUILT UP RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEM, HE CLAIMED. IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION ON AUGUST 20, DEMOCRACY ACTIVIST PHAM QUE DUONG TOLD POLOFF THAT HE HAD VISITED MRS. HA AT HER OFFICE EARLIER THAT DAY BUT NOTED NO SPECIAL PROBLEMS.

6. (C) DR. GIANG INFORMED POLOFF THAT ACTIVIST NGUYEN VU BINH, REPORTED BY THE NEW YORK-BASED COMMITTEE TO PROTECT JOURNALISTS TO HAVE BEEN DETAINED BY POLICE O/A JULY 19, HAD NOT ACTUALLY BEEN UNDER DETENTION. FOR A FEW DAYS THEREAFTER, HE WAS "INVITED" TO GO TO A POLICE STATION TO "WORK WITH THE POLICE," ACCORDING TO GIANG. BINH REPORTEDLY REMAINS UNDER HEIGHTENED SURVEILLANCE AND WAS DESCRIBED AS NOW "RELUCTANT" TO VISIT OTHER ACTIVISTS. BINH WAS FORMERLY AN EDITOR AT THE COMMUNIST JOURNAL, THE

CPV'S OFFICIAL MAGAZINE.

17. (C) ACTION REQUEST: PLEASE ADVISE IF DEPARTMENT
AUTHORIZES EMBASSY TO MAKE A FORMAL OR INFORMAL REQUEST FOR
AN UPDATE OF PHAM HONG SON'S STATUS, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF
FOREIGN NEWS REPORTS THAT HIS DETAINMENT WAS RELATED TO
TRANSLATION OF DOCUMENTS ABOUT DEMOCRACY ON THE STATE
DEPARTMENT'S WEBSITE. EMBASSY DOES NOT BELIEVE IT
ADVISABLE AT THIS TIME TO MAKE ANY INTERVENTION WITH MRS.
HA'S EMPLOYER.
PORTER

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